

Growing Garrard County: "An Introduction from Economic Development Director Nathan Mick"
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By Nathan Mick



As Garrard County's new Economic Development Director, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself, explain my general approach to economic development and make sure you know how to reach me so we can work together.

I grew up in Wymore, Nebraska, a small farm town with a population of 1,600. In 1999, I graduated from Centre College with a major in government and a minor in history. I am currently working on my Naval War College Masters degree in National Security and Strategic Studies with an expected completion date of June 2008.

Since graduating from Centre, I have served as a political and government advisor at the state and national levels. I had the privilege of working for State Representative Lonnie Napier and that is how I initially became familiar with Garrard County. I also worked five and a half years in Washington, DC for Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and served as his Deputy Chief of Staff. During my time in Washington, I had the opportunity to manage several projects directly relating to economic development. Since then I have been looking for ways to return to Kentucky and be a part of a community that is on the edge of major growth. I could not have moved to a better place than Garrard County.

I am honored to serve as your Economic Development Director. As Judge John Wilson states often, "economic development is community development." I agree. I am excited about getting involved in the Garrard County community, staying active and learning more about the rich history of this area. I believe economic success is built on a team effort. It is important that the entire community supports economic growth. That means investing in our local community and supporting local businesses. If the local community does not invest locally, why should anyone else? Part of my focus is making sure existing Garrard County businesses remain healthy and vibrant. According to the United States Small Business Association, two out of three new jobs are created by small businesses (generally defined as having less than 100 employees), and they account for nearly half of America's overall employment. Garrard County's pro-growth economy is interconnected with the success of its small businesses. We can all contribute to the economic development effort by promoting local investment and spending our dollars here.

Garrard County is primed for positive growth. The Grand Theater multi-million dollar renovation is underway; a \$25 million high school will open in 2010; the Lancaster Higher Education Center is seeing phenomenal growth; a new Justice Center is on its way; the roads to both Lexington and I-75 are expanding; and soon we will have a state park on Lake Herrington. These are just a few of the keys to sustained economic success in Garrard County. I find this community to be welcoming, friendly, safe and conveniently situated in the heart of the Bluegrass region. You have much to be proud of here and you can look forward to plenty of positive growth in Garrard County's future.

Another focus of my job will be bringing new businesses to Garrard County. I will be working with community leaders to help attract new businesses including retailers, manufacturers, corporations, and others who realize the economic advantages of Garrard County. We will be prepared to provide attractive incentive packages for new businesses and ensure we are doing all we can to compete in today's global market. I would appreciate your help encouraging your business contacts to consider Garrard County and communicating any potential business leads to me so that we can reach out and compete. If you are interested in expanding your business or starting a new one, please let me know so we can discuss what resources are currently available to you.

Economic development success requires energy, a winning attitude and a team effort from the entire community. As stated earlier, it is important for us to invest locally so others will too. Please find all of my contact information below. Contact me anytime with questions, comments, concerns, advice, suggestions and business leads. I look forward to getting to know all of you and working together to grow Garrard County. We're open for business!

Thank you.

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